

April 24, 2020
Issue #3

The **Crazy Wisdom** *Weekly*

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Please read our parent publication, *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*. You can find online archives on our website, crazywisdomjournal.com. The *Crazy Wisdom Journal* has been published three times a year since 1995.

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word of the week: **Kerfuffle**

A disorderly outburst or tumult.

Because of Covid-19, we didn't publish our usual springtime *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* in mid-April. (We will publish it later on in the spring.) But in the meantime, we thought we'd create a weekly online version—short, and lively, and perhaps a mild distraction for our local and regional readership. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, breathing exercises, favorite places for socially distant walks, news of your dogs, whatever. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.



The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

A Letter From the Editor

"Forcefield activate!"

The last two weeks I have found myself having to hit the forcefield button often. Nah, I haven't been playing superhero games with my boys, I'm just trying to make it through this quarantine with my sanity intact.

The noise on social media is deafening, and it's not just hurting my ears. The meaning behind the words "be kind" seem to fall through the cracks when people are safe behind their keyboards. As someone who strives to see both sides of the coin, it is hard for me to understand how others can be so blind to another's experience. A friend posted a writing about being in the same storm, but not in the same boat—I would argue that we aren't even in the same storm.

In our area we are blessed to have very few cases of the coronavirus compared to Detroit and other more densely populated cities around the world. There are those who are fearful of getting ill, and others who aren't afraid of the virus, but fear losing their livelihood. Both fears are legitimate, and yet it seems that many cannot even come to the agreement that both fears are valid—it's one or the other.

But it's not one or the other, it's both. The balance we so seek in our everyday lives, can also be found in this pandemic. It is terrible for those who have lost someone dear or become ill, it is also terrible for those unaffected by sickness, but affected by the lockdown—whether it be a suffering from loneliness, anxiety about how they will feed their families next week, or if they will ever be able to rebuild their small business.

So, I urge you all to be kind. To put yourself in another's shoes and to try and see the world from a different perspective. To support other's needs and desires, even if they are different from yours, and above all, be kind in word and deed.

Jennifer Carson

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Coronavirus Retreat

By Chris McCall

Solitary retreats are a familiar experience for me. I've been taking off into the woods to retreat all of my adult life. After I had cancer ten years ago, I scheduled these retreats as many as six times per year to support my healing process. Retreating alone has been an important piece of my self-care and a way to deepen into my meditation practice.

One thing I know for sure—when you enter into a solitary retreat, or even a group retreat for that matter, your “stuff” will come up. If you can turn to this “stuff” with warmth and a friendly curiosity, you will get to know your mental and emotional habits in a more intimate way. I've come to expect that this will happen on retreat. It's usually unpleasant, at first. My “work” will be to note the quality of my relationship with these thoughts and habits, and then to bring loving awareness into that relationship.

Dread is one of the first words that come to mind when my retreats approach. I have asked the question, “Why do I do this?” at the beginning of almost every retreat. Why do I have to sit alone with my feelings, when I could be at home on the couch with my fella, safe with my remote, performing tasks, which make me feel able and competent? The answer is, I continue to do this because my experience tells me that committing to being present and offering love to these aspects of my mind, is the most nurturing thing I can do for myself. I know that practicing in this way reveals deeper dimensions of being and it releases constrictive patterns in my body/mind. Simply “being” with love and presence is an immensely joyful experience. The voice of love inside of me knows that the gifts of practice are born from the inclusion of my light and my shadow within my consciousness. So, I unpack my bags and sit down with my resistance, as best I can.

Because of the coronavirus we have an opportunity to turn our isolation into a transformational and intentional experience. We can work intentionally with our boredom, our anger, our restlessness, our loneliness, our fear. In this very moment right now, we can offer loving awareness to these painful conditions, and in so doing, lay our burdens down.

Retreating can bring you to your knees. My friend, John Howie, the caretaker of Gilchrist Retreat Center, which has been the

container for many of my retreats, said that a long retreat, “will summon the Gods.” What does one do in the face of such power? I want to say, be still. Be honest. Respect the experience. But these suggestions can seem simplistic when the Gods are coming from within the constellations of your own unconscious patterns.

I recall on one of my retreats becoming acutely aware that my self-rejection manifested as a persistent certainty that whatever I was doing at any given moment was wrong and I should be doing something else. If I was doing Realization Process practice, I should be doing Vipassana. If I was walking, I should be sitting. If I was sleeping, I should be meditating. This habit, which has manifested in many ways throughout my life, became obvious to me. That piece of the gift, becoming aware of the pattern, was illuminating and difficult to take in.

I decided to challenge this rejecting behavior with love and support. I would respond to the rejection with, “This is exactly where I should be.” Every time it came up (dozens of times per day), “This is exactly where I should be” was my mantra. It was terrifying. Could I be trusted with this authority? The voices of skeptical authority figures, balking at my frivolous dharma, murmured in the background of my thoughts. I finally decided that I was not a teenager playing a drinking game at a party and I would experiment with giving my own wisdom the authority. It was a difficult practice and a radical perspective and it was exactly the challenge I needed.

Meeting this emotional pattern with love and support enabled me to relax into my self in a new way. I found a stability that I had never experienced before. This piece of the gift was precious and unexpected. I still visit this pattern, but I sometimes I see it coming from down the street, and it gives me enough time to pour the tea.

[Read more about McCall's Corona Retreat on our blog.](#)

Chris McCall is the owner of Sing Ann Arbor. She teaches meditation, singing, and songwriting online, in the time of Corona. Sing Ann Arbor hosts kirtan sessions the first Sunday of every month on Facebook Live and weekly group meditations on Zoom. www.singannarbor.com.

Pause. Breathe.

Speak slower than normal. When you explore this option, you disengage from any chaos or stress in your life and sink into your body. Then your heart-sanity will be restored. Living life, no matter what is happening, is a learning process with trials and errors, not a goal.

- **Brenda Morgan Ph.D**
movedbythelight.com

Artwork by Sarah Tea. [See more of her work online.](#)



COMFORT FOOD

△ LITTLE TASTE OF SUMMER

Lemon rosemary bars

By Angela Madaras, adapted from Ree Drummond

Makes 24 scones/bars

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup raw sugar
- 1 Tbs plus 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 sticks cold butter
- 2 cups half and half
- 1 egg
- Lemon zest one lemon
- 3 sprigs minced Rosemary

Cut butter into squares, then with a pastry cutter, cut it into pea-sized bits. Combine the sugar, butter, and eggs in your mixing bowl. Add the egg and half and half. Lastly add the lemon zest and minced Rosemary. Usually I put all the Rosemary in the batter, but you may like to keep half of it to sprinkle on top of the bars.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt.

With a dough hook and mixer set to low, combine the dry ingredients with the wet. When the dough pulls away from the mixing bowl, place dough ball on a large rectangle of parchment paper.

Cut the dough into triangles and/or rectangular bars.

Line your baking sheet with parchment paper and place on baking sheets, spaced apart.

Bake at 350 degrees for 18 minutes. Optionally, you can garnish the top of your bars by adding a bit of lemon zest when serving.

[You can find more great recipes from Angela Madaras on her blog.](#)

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Tarot Card of the Week

The Hierophant

By Carol Karr

The message of The Hierophant reminds us of the marvelous accomplishments of humankind and of the great resources of knowledge that are available to us. It also encourages us to respect the achievements of generations past. Use this knowledge to create with usefulness and beauty. Do not disdain tradition out of hand but see what wonderful things it has to offer.

For those in relationships, the hierophant is the marriage and commitment card of the Major Arcana. You can expect your relationship to become more committed and begin moving toward new relationship milestones when this card appears. It indicates that you and your partner share the same values and goals, a very good card to get if a committed relationship is what you want. If you are single, this card signifies a new relationship on the horizon which will be built on commitment, love, and security.

The Hierophant is a very spiritual card. He is known as the link between mankind and the Higher Power. A spiritual advisor might be coming into your life to guide you on your spiritual path. While the Hierophant is generally associated with traditional religious practice, if you don't adhere to a



“traditional” religion, his appearance signifies that you will benefit from building some sort of ritual or ceremony into your spiritual practice.

The featured tarot card is from the Radiant Rider-Waite Tarot Deck. [You can find this beautiful deck in our online shop.](#)

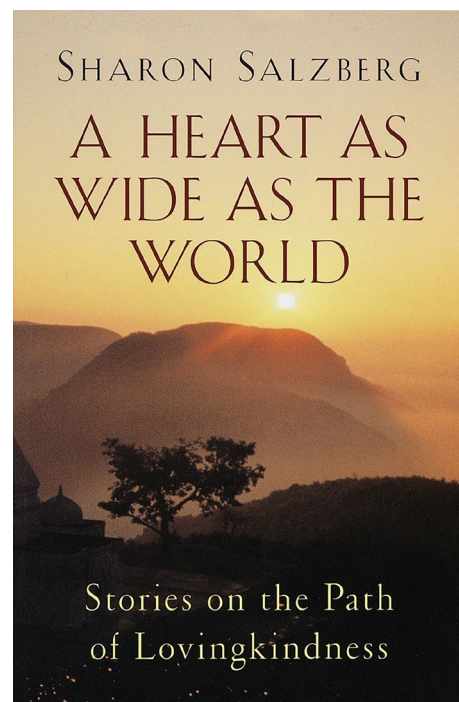
Crazy Wisdom Book Pick of the Week

This week's book pick of the week is from Sarah Newland, a Senior Manager at Crazy Wisdom.

A Heart as Wide as the World: Stories on the Path of Lovingkindness by Sharon Salzberg

This is a lovely book of conversational stories from Sharon's own life, devoted to Buddhism and Insight Meditation. They are soothing, tender reminiscences that have helped me have a more open, loving heart. This is a sweet little book that can be read anytime, or given to your most treasured friends.

You can purchase this book through Crazy Wisdom's online shop. [Click here to purchase your own copy of *A Heart as Wide as the World: Stories on the Path of Lovingkindness*.](#)



What's Up in Our Community

The Crazy Wisdom staff has missed seeing and interacting with many of you during our period of quarantine and we wondered what you were up to—so we asked!!

Lama Nancy Burks was the first to respond about how she's spending her days. Thanks for sharing, Nancy!

Because we aren't allowed to gather, how have you been filling your days?

I've been filling my days being closer with my husband and dog. Definitely doing more meditation and prayer. I've been enjoying time baking, talking to old friends, and even cleaning. A more relaxed pace. We are both retired, so fortunately, don't have to worry about jobs, kids in school, or other challenges facing younger folks. On the other hand, we both have medical conditions, so we're totally isolating ourselves at home.

When you find yourself feeling blue and isolated from friends, what do you do to raise your spirits?

Doing a lot more virtual talking. We had a meeting of our meditation group on Zoom and it was so uplifting to be together, and also to see members who live farther away. A hot bath always helps, too.

What meditations/mantras have you been encouraging people to use during this time?

Medicine Buddha visualization and mantra helps with all kinds of healing. Medicine Buddha is called the King of Lapis Lazuli light, and he emits dark blue healing rays which we can direct at specific people or just all living beings.

Have you developed a new daily habit that you'd like to keep when this period of quarantine is over?

Being more mindful of my feelings, which makes it easier to respond with awareness. Until the self-quarantine, I seemed to always be in a hurry, and if someone interrupted my pace, I would get irritated. So, now I'm snapping at my husband less, and, guess what? He's snapping at me less, too!

When this period is over, what is the first thing you want to do that you haven't been able to do?

Go into Kroger's (which, in my fantasy, is fully stocked), and pick out all my own groceries, and bring them home without having to worry about bringing in the virus.

***Lama Nancy Burks** is the director of the Ann Arbor KTC Tibetan Buddhist Meditation center on Miner St. She was trained as a lama at Karme Ling Retreat Center in Delhi, NY. Nancy is a retired clinical psychologist.*



YOGA

Pose of the Week



BADDHA KONASANA OR BOUND ANGLE

By Katie Hoener

Some of us are doing an extraordinary amount of sitting right now, even when we are scheduling our movement time! It is important to find ways to keep the muscles of the low back and hips from locking or being in over-stressed positions for long.

A nice way of doing this is in our Bound Angle posture. Many of us will like props under the “sitting” bones to allow the pelvis to be neutral.

When we have found a place where the pelvis can be neutral, and the spine can lift long, we can allow the knees to open away from the midline of the body. Not all of us, each day, or any day will be able to touch our feet as seen in the photo above. The distance of the feet from the body also varies based on what our bodies are ready for. I know of late, I have been surprised at some of the places that I have been holding tension. Each day offers a new opportunity to take notice and take care.

With the spine long we may want to take a few breaths, making adjustments that meet the needs of the day. We may want to lead with the heart and move forward a bit, taking care to be neutral with the chin. Find the space where you feel that comfortable amount of release and sit with it. Feel free to sit for a few breaths, then take the legs out long and shake them out and come back in, making adjustments as needed. This is a posture that we can offer ourselves as we perhaps watch an episode of our favorite show on television, or check-in with a friend. Allow yourself some space for release!

From Our Blog

A 21st Century “Sabbath Day” Experiment

By Holly Makimaa

If you are a recovering type A like me, and someone asked you to take a Sabbath day every week to do nothing, you might start to feel your chest constricting and a stress response mounting in your body:

“Do nothing, won’t that just leave more work piled up for later? When will I do my laundry, go grocery shopping, address that stack of bills, etc.? It sounds luscious, but how can I afford it? When can I fit in social time with loved ones, then?”

What if taking a Sabbath actually made all that is on your plate easier and relationships more fulfilling? Instead of a full plate feeling heavy, it could feel nourishing. I used to feel resistant to taking a day off, and now I don’t know how I could live without a Sabbath. If you are thinking that by Sabbath I mean a highly rule-oriented day of do’s and don’ts based on a religion, please keep reading because that is far from what I mean. Yes, a Sabbath does involve slowing down and refraining from constant activity, but it is more about a state of mind than said actions or non-actions.

In a recent Sabbath experience, I had chosen Saturday to stay close to home, enjoy the river by my apartment, write, read, and connect with what I most needed (including having a friend over for tea and deep conversation). I remembered, however, that I had to go to the store for a few groceries and return an item to a chain store retailer before the 30-day return policy expired. Initially I thought this might throw off the balance of peace I was feeling. Yet, as I approached my shopping with the attitude that I was there to simply be present to all that happened without hurrying or an agenda, I savored the colors, and walked slowly and mindfully through the store with its fluorescent lighting flickering—without feeling bothered as I might normally. When I checked out, I really looked at the cashier, marveling at the graceful way her freckled, dough-colored hands moved each item into my bag. I asked her how she was, sincerely open to her response, and wished her a good day from the fullness of my heart. I didn’t leave my Sabbath, and it didn’t leave me. Having time set aside to go inward helped me to be in the outward world with a heightened sense of appreciation for the deep connection to life I have — when I am mindful enough to engage it.

Leonard Felder, in the book *the Ten Challenges*, helped revitalize my understanding of the original purpose of the Sabbath and made it more appealing to me.

[Read more about Holly’s Sabbath Day experiment on our blog.](#)

Local Music Online Concerts!

John Finan has been writing songs since the age of 15. He is known by music enthusiasts for his mix of introspective and funny songwriting, as well as his improvisational guitar work.

After years of playing in original and cover bands, he started playing his own material in the 1990s and hasn't looked back. His musical stylings are described as folk and acoustic rock.

He has recently released his 5th CD titled, "Believer." The album is a mix of ballads, rockers, heartbreak, humor, possible blasphemy, and yes, road kill.

You can learn more about Finan on his website
johnfinanmusic.com.



In stillness I allow
answers to flow.

[Laurel Decker Hogge ~ Four Corners Wellness Guide](#)

Photo by Mario Döbelmann on Unsplash

Learn and Heal Online from Local Practitioners & Teachers

Even though many businesses and offices are closed, many local teachers are offering online classes and trainings and many practitioners are offering distance or telemed sessions. We reached out to our local community to see how teachers and practitioners have changed and adapted in order to continue meeting with clients and learners. If you are a teacher or practitioner, please let us know how we can help you get the word out about your offerings!

Andrea Kennedy, Reiki Master practitioner and teacher, is seeing clients for Distance Reiki sessions and now offering Reiki classes online.

Distance Reiki allows you to enjoy the benefits of Reiki no matter where you are located! These sessions are powerful and unique in that you may receive the full benefits of a Reiki session while in your own home. There is no driving or hassle because Reiki is energy, it is not limited by distance from the practitioner. At your appointment time, Andrea will call you and discuss any intentions you may have for the Reiki session and then proceed as though you were in the office with her. Please plan on being in a quiet, relaxing environment throughout your session.

Andrea will tune into your energetic system, how it is functioning and look for what has been affecting it as she provides Reiki. She will take notes and then call you back for the final 15 minutes so she may share her assessment, suggestions and answer your questions. She often also shares practical things you might do to support the positive effects of the Reiki treatment and to help you move forward in a noticeable way. Andrea can audio record this portion of the session and email it to you. Many clients find this valuable and helpful to reference later. Clients can save \$10 by entering the code TEN\$OFF when they schedule online.

[Schedule a session with Andrea Kennedy, or learn more about her Reiki trainings.](#)

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5 QUESTIONS FOR Scott Carter

1. When did you know you were an artist?

That is a good question. Perhaps when I got out of high school? I identified as an athlete in high school, but once I got out I felt less labeled and found more freedom to move in a creative way. This would put me at 19 years old.

2. What was the biggest roadblock you faced to becoming an artist?

Finding the time and consistency for working in the studio, learning my own style and technique, and, of course, financially supporting myself.

3. What inspires your work?

Movement, music, living a textured life, the creativity of others.

One of my artistic inspirations is a quote attributed to Joseph Campbell that the meaning of life is to “follow your bliss.” Taking this mantra to heart, in 2005, together with a friend, I co-created the feature film ONE about the meaning of life. In 2009, I created my first painting while processing a traumatic life event. I applied silicone and acrylic material to a hollow core door, covering it with enamel. Since then, I have continuously developed my technique. Nowadays, I customize thick enamel paint to create texture and use acrylic paint for highlights. While painting on doors allows me to create the large format I desire, I no longer purchase new substrates to be more sustainable in my artwork and create an upcycle. Since 2015, I have only been using recycled doors and wood that I find on the street or have been donated by my local community.

Beyond my life’s mantra and yoga, I am inspired by the colors of nature, urban spaces, my visions, meditation, the variety of shapes and textures I encounter in my everyday, as well as being surrounded by people who express their own creative power and energy. When you engage with my artwork, it may as well mirror your own experiences in this world.

4. What is your dream project?

Art Prize 2020 in Grand Rapids (which I’m working on right now). Hopefully, the event won’t be canceled this fall.

5. Do you make a living on your art, or do you have a day job? If you have a day-job, what is it?

In my day job, I work as a yoga teacher. Another source of my artistic inspiration is my regular practice as a yoga teacher in the local Ann Arbor community. For me, life is movement and, through mindful movement, yoga brings awareness to one’s physical,



The artwork above features a conversation with Thich Nhat Hanh. With all the distractions we have around us, how do we find the present moment?



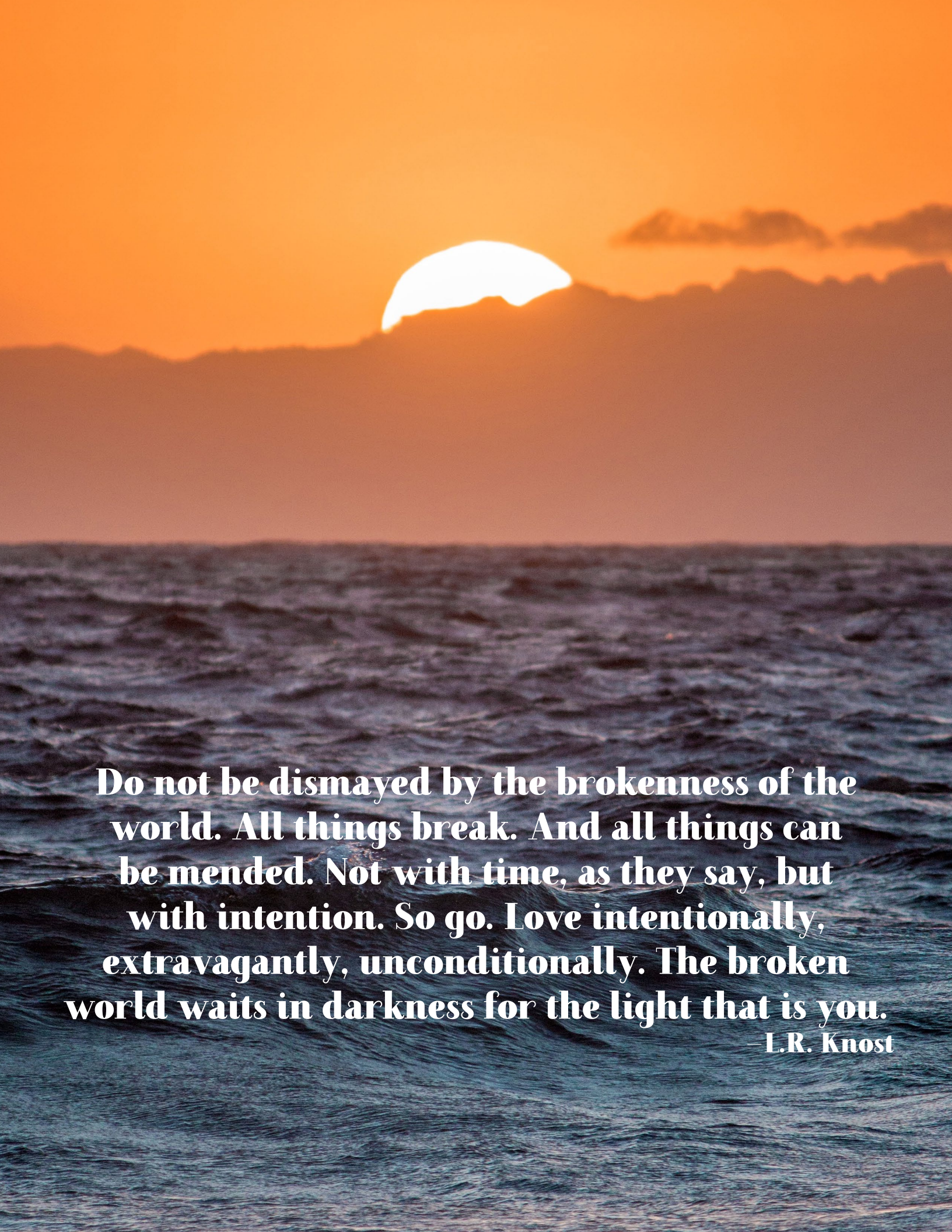
This artwork features a conversation with Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. How can we find connection and oneness in these times of separation?

energetic, emotional, and spiritual bodies. I'm convinced that yoga expands our capacity for experience. I want my art to do the same. My large format paintings invites the viewers to expand their experiences through multiple textures, colors, sizes, and shapes. Just as in yoga, movement plays a fundamental role in my artistic creations. In my studio, I build large paddles to "move paint" while the substrate may be on the floor, on a stand, or leaning against the wall. "Movement" shines through the many textured layers in each art piece, offering a variety of interpretations and emotions. To me, these layers simulate the human experience, my feelings, thoughts, and beliefs.

Scott Carter was born in Royal Oak, Michigan, into a family of artists. His grandfather was at the forefront of large format automotive glass screen printing in Detroit, creating a business that was passed on to his son and then to Scott. A third-generation silkscreen maker and printer, he's been creating art his entire life. Carter lives in Ann Arbor, and his art is currently showing in multiple locations around Ann Arbor and Detroit. He also offers private tours of his studio for anyone interested in purchasing his works. [Visit him online](#) for more information.

The artwork below features a conversation with Deepak Chopra. The question of "who am I?" has been around from the beginning. During the filming of "ONE the movie," we sat down with Deepak Chopra and asked him his thoughts on the issue.



A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright white semi-circle partially obscured by dark, silhouetted clouds. The sky is a deep orange, and the ocean below is dark blue with white-capped waves.

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.
— I.R. Knost